

Braidwood Seeks Housing Project For U.S. Arsenal

By FRANK KUEST

Washington, Dec. 12. (Copley Press Leased Wire)—With the Joliet Arsenal selected to become the ordnance ammunition center for the United States army, the question of housing the thousands of new workers expected to be employed at the arsenal was raised here today.

In that connection, Rep. Noah Mason (R-Ill) has forwarded to

John Taylor Egan, public housing administrator, a letter suggesting Braidwood as an ideal site for any new government housing projects that may be erected to accommodate workers at the arsenal.

The letter sent to Egan was written by Paul E. Thurlow, president of the Braidwood Chamber of Commerce.

"One of the major problems facing the government in producing munitions at the arsenal is that of finding adequate housing for employees," Thurlow advised Mason. "The city of Braidwood is located nine miles south of the arsenal and there are adequate transportation facilities to handle those workers desiring to reside in Braidwood.

"**WITHIN THE** city limits some 2,500 housing units can be built and there are several vacant areas of 40 acres or more each where government housing projects should be located for the convenience of arsenal employees desiring to live in Braidwood."

Mason is awaiting a reply from Egan, who may delay his answer until the government's policy on federal housing projects that may be needed because of the nation's stepped up war effort crystallizes.

The extent of the expansion of the Joliet Arsenal has not been disclosed by the army, but since the arsenal will become the ordnance ammunition center, thousands of new workers are expected to be hired there.

The center will supervise and control expanded ordnance ammunition activities in connection with the current expansion of the army.

THE ARMY decided to expand the Joliet Arsenal in a move to decentralize the nation's ammunition program away from Washington, D. C., where most of the work was performed during World War II.

The decentralization will avoid personnel expansion in the nation's capital which will be required to handle the stepped up ordnance ammunition program.

The army said the location at Joliet of the center will place the new headquarters at a point geographically desirable and accessible to the major ammunition producing firms of the nation.

The chief function of the center will be to procure the bulk of ordnance ammunition, to command all ordnance loading, explosive powder and chemical plants and to supervise renovation and demilitarization of ammunition.

THE ARMY stated that the existing facilities at Joliet will be used for the new center and that no expansion of present buildings is contemplated at this time.

No estimate has been made at the number of new workers that will be required at the new center, altho it has been indicated that the projected increase will be made slowly as the center assumes its new functions.